

STUDY REFERENCE

GRAMMAR A Japanese writer living in the U.K.

Language Summary

Relative clauses

Defining

*Britain is the place **where he has spent most of his life.***

- In the example above, the defining relative clause gives more information about the subject (Britain). *Britain is the place* by itself, does not make the speaker's meaning clear. The additional information, *where he has spent most of his life* provides the necessary context to convey the speaker's meaning.

- You use the relative pronouns *which*, *who*, *where*, or *that* to begin defining relative clauses.

*The novel **that** made him internationally famous was set in Britain.*

*The novel **which** made him internationally famous was set in Britain.*

- *That* can also be used instead of *which* or *who*.

*This is the woman **who / that** I told you about.*



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Relative clauses cont.

Non-defining

The butler, who is played by James Smith in the movie version, loves the housekeeper.

- In the example above, the non-defining relative clause does provide extra information about the subject (the butler), but you don't need this information to understand the meaning of the sentence. The meaning of *The butler loves the housekeeper* is clear. The clause *who is played by James Smith in the movie version* provides some additional information about the butler.
- You use the relative pronouns *who*, *which*, and *where*, but you **cannot** use *that*. The clauses are also separated from the rest of the sentence with commas.
- Non-defining relative clauses are used much more in writing than in speaking.

